

Office of the Deputy Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education
Pennsylvania Department of Education
February 11, 2013

TO: All LEAs

FROM: Carolyn Dumaresq, Deputy Secretary
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

RE: State Assessment Administration
Possession and/or Use of Electronic Devices

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has received an unprecedented number of communications from schools/districts concerning student use of cell phones during the administration of the Keystone Exams. The purpose of this Penn*Link is to remind schools and districts of PDE's cell phone policy during testing, and what should be done if a student is caught using a cell phone or other electronic device during testing. These rules and policies apply to the administration of both the Keystone Exams and the PSSA.

All cell phones, smart phones, and other prohibited electronic devices are to be collected as students enter the testing site. Thus, school districts and schools should do the following:

- * Inform parents and students before testing that cell phones are not allowed during the test administration;
- * Inform parents and students that the consequence for using and/or having a cell phone or other electronic device during the test administration will result in the application of a "Do Not Score" label on his/her test booklet or appropriate notification to not score on the online version, and the student will not receive a score;
- * Inform parents and students that, if the student uses a cell phone or electronic device in any manner during the administration of the test, the phone or electronic device will be confiscated until such time that the parent or guardian can come to the school, and in the presence of the parent or guardian, the cell phone or other electronic device will be viewed to ensure that no information or material regarding the assessment is present;
- * Inform parents and students that violation of the no cell phone or other electronic device rule will result in discipline and that discipline will vary depending on whether test material has been compromised; and
- * Inform parents and students that any items on an assessment that have been compromised, and can no longer be used will have to be replaced, and the parents and students may be responsible for the cost of replacement.

District personnel, school personnel and students must understand that the integrity of the test cannot be compromised. There have been too many reports of students texting questions/answers and taking pictures of questions; thus I request the full cooperation of all district and school personnel in complying with this policy.